



**Indiana Registry of Soil Scientists**  
Office of Indiana State Chemist; Purdue University  
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## **Application Instructions**

### **Background**

The 2001 Indiana General Assembly passed legislation that established a registration program for soil scientists called the Indiana Registry of Soil Scientists (IRSS). This program will help protect the health of Hoosiers and protect the quality of our soil and water resources.

Registration will result in higher degree of professionalism among soil scientists through greater technical competence and high ethical standards. Now most consulting soil scientists evaluate the suitability of soils for absorbing and purifying wastewater from homes not connected to a sewer system. Greater technical competence will result in better soil information supplied to those who make decisions about land use. Continuing education of registered soil scientists will also encourage better communication among other partners in wastewater disposal, such as regulators, designers, installers, and maintenance people. All this should result in fewer failures of onsite systems, less contamination of surface and ground water, and less potential for transmitting diseases through drinking water or direct contact with contaminated water.

The law that established soil science registration is Indiana Code, Title 25, Article 31.5 (IC 25-31.5). The rules by which the IRSS program functions are in IAC 307. The Governor appointed a five member Board of Registration for Soil Scientists to administer IRSS through the Office of Indiana State Chemist, a state agency located on the Purdue University campus. The law specifies two kinds of registration. Associate registration is similar to Professional registration except for the number of years of professional work experience. The law also requires continuing education. Further, it specifies the action the Board can take against registered soil scientists for incompetence, failure to follow a code of professional conduct, or other causes. Such action could result from complaints filed by clients, regulators, or other people.

To become a Registered Professional Soil Scientist in Indiana, one must meet these requirements:

- Agree to follow a Code of Professional Conduct.
- Have B.S. or higher degree and must have completed 15 semester credit hours of soil science courses, 45 credits in supporting sciences, and certain other courses. Specific requirements are listed on the Education Form.
- Pass a Soil Science Fundamentals exam (Either the CSSE fundamentals exam administered by ARCPACS or the IRSS fundamentals exam).
- Pass the Indiana Soils and Field Skills exam
- Have at least three years of work experience, mainly in Pedology, as explained in the Experience Form.

The Board may waive the requirement to pass the fundamentals exam for applicants who are currently registered, certified, or licensed in another state and have passed a similar exam. To become a Registered Associate Soil Scientist, one must meet all requirements except work experience. When he or she gains the required experience, he/she may apply to upgrade registration from the associate to the professional level.

## How to Become Registered

First, complete the Application for Registration. **Item 1** is information about yourself. Much of it will be used in a Roster of Indiana Soil Scientists published by IRSS.

Under **item 2**, check one of the three boxes. You can fulfill the requirement for the Soil Science Fundamentals Exam by passing either the Council of Soil Science Examiners (CSSE) Fundamentals Exam, administered by ARCPACS, or the Indiana Fundamentals Exam, administered by IRSS. These exams cover all aspects of soil science and are not specific to Indiana. The Indiana Soils and Field Skills exam covers factors and processes of soil formation in Indiana; soil geography, soil morphology, including describing soil color, texture, structure, and consistence and estimating the percent of sand silt and clay in soil samples, and related topics. More information about the exams is available on the IRSS website. Usually, a fundamentals exam and the Indiana soils exam can be taken the same day.

The cost of Registration is \$240.00 for three years. This includes the fee for taking the two IRSS exams the first time. If you need to take an IRSS exam again, the cost is \$50.00 per time. ARCPACS charges for taking the CSSE exam. All examinations are offered twice a year on the Purdue University campus on the dates set by ARCPACS, usually in March and October. The IRSS website will list when the next exams are scheduled and, for the Indiana exams, what material to study, how to obtain study guides, and other pertinent information. Make arrangements with IRSS and with ARCPACS (if you choose to take the CSSE Exam), at least two months before they are offered. For IRSS, see letterhead; ARCPACS, 677 South Segoe Rd., Madison, WI 53711; phone, (608) 273-8085; <http://www.Soils.org/csse/>.

Use **item 3** of the application form to list the names of at least three people who are familiar with your work.

IRSS will prepare and update a Roster lists all Registered Soil Scientists. For those who offer their services to the public, the Roster will show the county in which the office is located and will list the area of the state in which the soil scientist works. Registrants should check the Roster occasionally to make sure their information is up to date.